

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

AID-05 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 /101 W

-----116031 191534Z /44

P R 191705Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6373

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0810

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, BY

SUBJECT: "WORK STOPPAGE" IN THE BU

UNDIAN ARMY

1. BEGINNING MORNING JULY 18, MOST, OR PERHAPS ALL, MILITARY AND GENDARMERIE UNITS IN BUJUMBURA HAVE BEEN "ON STRIKE" FOR HIGHER PAY AND EMOLUMENTS. PROMOTERS OF MOVEMENT SEEM TO BE NONCOMS SUPPORTED BY ORDINARY TROOPS. SEVERAL SOURCES INDICATE THAT SAME TROUBLE HAS SPREAD TO MAJOR CAMPS IN INTERIOR OF COUNTRY. MOST REPORTS DECLARE THAT PRESIDENT BAGAZA'S EFFORT TO END THE MUTINY AND RESTORE DISCIPLINE WAS REBUFFED, AND THAT CURRENT ACTION INVOLVES SURETE CHIEF, COLONEL SYLVERE NZOHABONAYO, ACTING AS GO-BETWEEN FROM SUPREME REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (IN CONSTANT SESSION) TO DISAFFECTED TROOPS.

2. SO FAR, BURUNDI RADIO HAS CARRIED NOTHING OF THIS AFFAIR, AND THOUGH NEWS OF THE TROUBLE IS KNOWN FAIRLY WIDELY AMONG CIVILIAN POPULATION, LIFE AND BUSINESS IN BUJUMBURA ARE COMPLETELY NORMAL. MOST PEOPLE EXPECT SOME SORT OF SETTLEMENT WHICH GIVES

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SOLDIERS WHAT THEY WANT, WHICH IS INCREASE IN INCOME COMPARABLE TO THAT GIVEN JULY ONE TO OFFICERS AND TOP LEVEL SERGEANTS (WHO WERE OSTENSIBLY BEING COMPENSATED FOR THE TERMINATION OF THEIR FREE HOUSING GRANT).

3. WE HAVE NOT RPT NOT HEARD THAT THERE IS ANY POLITICAL CONTENT AT ALL IN THIS STRIKE ACTION. HOWEVER, THERE IS EVERY SIGN OF

ADVANCE COORDINATION AMONG THE STRIKE LEADERS IN THE CAPITAL,
AND PROBABLY IN THE INTERIOR AS WELL. ONE CANNOT HELP WONDERING
WHETHER SOME OFFICERS (WHOSE HAND IS STILL HIDDEN) MAY BOT RPT
NOT HAVE HELPED PRECIPITATE THE ACTION. EVEN IF THIS IS NOT RPT
NOT THE CASE, A VICTORY FOR THE NONCOMS AND TROOPS WILL CERTAINLY
BE HEADY WINE LEADING THEM TO A NEW REALIZATION OF THEIR POTEN-
TIAL POWER, ENHANCED BY THEIR SUCCESSFUL REBUFF OF BAGAZA.
UNLESS THE PRESIDENT AND TOP COMMAND CAN DO SOME REORGANIZING
AND RESHUFFLING TO RESTORE EFFECTIVE LOYALTY AND DISCIPLINE,
THE REGIME WILL SEEM CONSTANTLY WEAK AND UNCERTAIN OF ITS COURSE
AND STAYING POWER. THIS COULD BE AN OPEN SESAME FOR A RENEWAL
OF INTRIGUES OF ALL SORTS, AND AN UNDERMINING OF THE SELF-
CONFIDENCE AND QUEST FOR STABILITY WHICH THE BAGAZA GOVERNMENT
DEEPLY NEEDS.
MARK

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